

doing so. There is also a growing recognition of an increasing tendency for children, even very young children, to be overweight and even obese. Obesity in children is known to be a major factor in childhood diabetes. Whilst children's diets particularly the consumption of junk foods is a major cause of obesity, lack of exercise is a significant contributing factor. However while parents recognise that children should be getting more exercise for the good of their health they also recognise that it is generally safer for their children to be at home playing computer games than outside playing in a public area such as a park or the like.

It is an aim of the present invention to provide a computer games controller in which a player's physical involvement in their chosen gaming activity can be increased.

Any discussion of documents, acts, materials, devices, articles or the like which has been included in the present specification is solely for the purpose of providing a context for the present invention. It is not to be taken as an admission that any or all of these matters form part of the prior art base or were common general knowledge in the field relevant to the present invention as it existed before the priority date of each claim of this application.

Summary of the Invention

In a first broad aspect of the present invention, there is provided a means for controlling a computer game in which a player is suspended in a chair harness or the like from a control means, the arrangement being such that the player may move the chair of harness to control functions on the computer game.

More specifically, the invention provides a computer game controller comprising means for suspending a player, in a chair harness or the like, from a bearing, the bearing including a control means for inputting position signals to a computer to control the movement of a sprite such as a vehicle or character, in a computer game, the arrangement being such that movement of the player's body may move the chair or harness to control the sprite in the computer game.

The control means is typically an inverted joy stick. Movement of the game player performs the normal up, down and side to side control functions of the joy stick. Other control functions of the joy stick may be mounted on handlebars, steering wheel or other control means that are operable by a player's hands and that are fixed to the frame from which the player is suspended. A rotational controller for control based on rotation about a vertical axis may also be provided.

One advantage of the present invention is that a player of computer game is able to utilise their entire body in a seated or prone position to control action in any type of computer game.

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CLAIMS:

1. A computer game controller comprising means for suspending a player, in a chair harness or the like, from a bearing, the bearing including a control means for inputting position signals to a computer to control the movement of a sprite such as a vehicle or character, in a computer game, the arrangement being such that movement of the player's body may move the chair or harness to control the sprite in the computer game.
2. A computer game controller as claimed in claim 1 wherein the means for suspending a player comprises a frame and wherein a handlebar means which can be grasped by the player in use is attached to the frame.
3. A computer game controller as claimed in claim 2 wherein the position of the handlebar means is adjustable.
4. A computer game controller as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 3 wherein the control means is of the joy stick type or of a rotational control wheel type.
5. A computer game controller as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 4 wherein game control means, other than movement control means for the sprite, are located on handle bars, steering wheel or other control means that are operable by a player's hands.
6. A computer game controller as claimed in any one of claims 2 to 5 wherein the frame is a tripod.
7. A computer game controller as claimed in any one of claims 2 to 6 wherein the frame may be folded down, dis-assembled or otherwise collapsed for storage and transport.
8. A computer game controller as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 7 wherein the player is suspended in a chair and wherein the chair includes an adjustable foot rest.
9. A computer game controller as claimed in any one of claims 2 to 7 wherein the frame is made from aluminium.
10. A computer game controller comprising:
 - a frame having a head incorporating a bearing means;
 - means for suspending a player from the bearing means, the bearing means including a position control means for inputting position signals to a computer for controlling the movement of a sprite such as a vehicle or character in a computer game being played on the computer;
 - handlebar means which may be fixed relative to the frame and grasped by the player;

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the arrangement being such that movement of the player grasping the handlebar means and moving their body may cause rotational, side to side or back and forth movement of the bearing causing a corresponding movement in the control means.

11. A computer game controller as claimed in claim 10 wherein the position control
5 means is of the joy stick type or a rotational wheel type.
12. A computer game system for playing a computer game comprising a computer console, a display means for displaying a game being played on the computer game system, and a game controller as claimed in any preceding claim wherein movement of the body of a player suspended from the game controller is arranged to cause
10 movement of a sprite in the game being played.
13. The use of a computer game controller as claimed in any preceding claim for physiotherapy or exercise applications.

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